

SPIN FOR YOUR LIFE

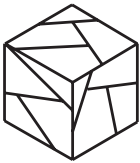


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CARSON THE GREAT

Carson Schwartz checked his phone. “Yes!” he said. “It’s almost here!”

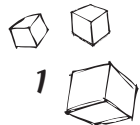


Cube Spinner Tracker



The shelves in Carson’s room were filled with gadgets. He couldn’t wait to add this new one. It was a Cube Spinner. Most kids at school had one. They were small puzzle cubes. You spun parts of the cube to make different shapes.

Nobody has one like this, Carson thought.



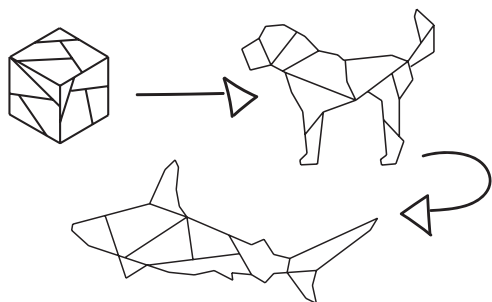
He stared at the picture of it on his phone.

It's special.

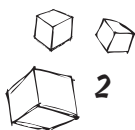
Carson loved watching videos of kids playing with Cube Spinners. The videos were posted on KidVid. This was a popular website. Carson and all his friends posted videos on the site too.

He pulled up a new one. A kid from Bearing Middle School had posted it. That was Carson's school.

The kid spun his cube. In three spins, he made a dog. He spun it more. His fingers flew. Now it was a shark.



Pfft. I can do better than that.

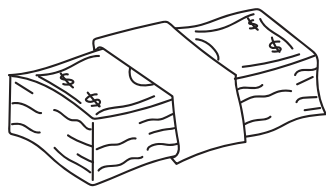


This guy is good, Carson thought. *But not as good as I am*. Carson always had to be the best. No one was allowed to beat him at anything.

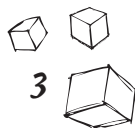
He was in sixth grade, and his school had a gaming club. They always played *Clan Castles*. It was Carson's favorite video game. Currently, he had the highest score. So his friends called him "Carson the Great."

Soon he checked his phone again. Carson had ordered the Cube Spinner from Geek Spot. The site sold all kinds of gadgets. Some were new. Others were used.

This spinner was rare. It was used. But it looked brand-new. The shiny silver cube was expensive too. It cost \$40. Carson had saved up his allowance for weeks.



That's a lot of money!



Looking at the spinner's picture made his thoughts race. *I bet this thing makes so many shapes.* He got even more excited.

Knock, knock.

“Hey, bud.” Carson’s dad poked his head around the door. “Are you playing that new *Monster Crush* game?”

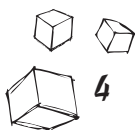


“Nah,” Carson said. “I beat it already.”

His dad smiled. “Of course you did. Don’t stay up too late, okay? I know you like to be the best. But even the best need rest.”

Carson rolled his eyes. “Sure, Dad. Good night.”

Mr. Schwartz winked at his son. Then he shut the door behind him.



Finally, Carson put his phone down. It was time to go to bed. The sooner he slept, the sooner his spinner would arrive.

School the next day was a blur. All Carson could think about was his spinner. The last bell finally rang. Carson raced home. His best friend Eli Holmes was with him. Eli had dark skin and curly hair. He was tall like Carson.

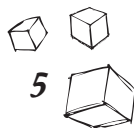
A box was on Carson's doorstep.

"Is it heavy?" Eli asked. He sat on his BMX bike. Eli loved to ride. He had tons of trophies from races he'd won.

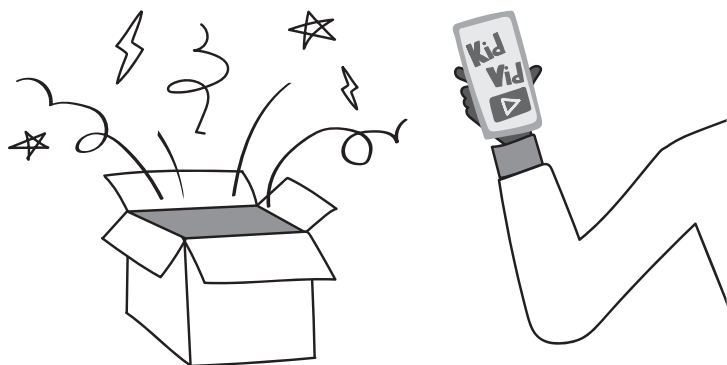
Eli=great
BMX rider



Carson=best
spinner



“Yeah.” Carson beamed. He held the box carefully. “Let’s go make an unboxing video!”



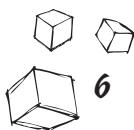
The boys went up to Carson’s room. Eli took out his phone. He started recording.

“It’s huge,” Carson said as he opened the box. “Bigger than any spinner I’ve ever seen.” He took the spinner out. Then he held it up to the camera. “Heavier too.”

“Are you going to spin it?” Eli asked.

Carson rolled his eyes. “Yeah, duh!”

He held the cube with both hands. Then he started to spin it.



“Wow,” Carson said. “This turns really smoothly. It’s almost like it’s spinning itself.” His fingers worked fast. He twisted a piece one way. Another part was spun a different way.

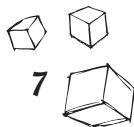
Finally, a shape snapped into place. It was a spider.



Carson gasped. “Wow!”

“Ladies and gentlemen,” Eli said. “This Cube Spinner is fresh out of the box. And Carson Schwartz has already made a spider!”

Carson smiled. Spiders were complex shapes. Only expert spinners could make them.

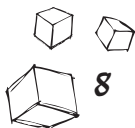


Eli kept filming. Carson spun the cube some more. He pulled off shape after shape. His focus was set on the cube. It almost felt like he was in a trance.



After a while, Eli put the phone down. “Okay. I think that’s good. I need some fresh air. Let’s go for a ride.”

Carson kept spinning. Different shapes formed. “Nah,” he said. “I want to practice. Alex Phan thinks he’s the best spinner in school. I have to prove him wrong.”



“Oh.” Eli frowned. “Okay. I guess I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Later.” Carson did not look up. He just kept spinning.

